

Top Secret



DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam

State Department review completed

DIA , OSD REVIEWS COMPLETED

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31 July 1967

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Information as of 1600
31 July 1967

HIGHLIGHTS

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I. The Military Situation in South Vietnam:
US Marine casualties reached more than 200 in a heavy encounter near Con Thien over the weekend (Paras. 1-3). Enemy forces made well-coordinated mortar and rocket attacks against three US and South Vietnamese Army positions just north and east of Saigon on 29 July (Paras. 4-7).

II. Political Developments in South Vietnam:

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Tran Van Huong's campaign organization in the provinces is growing, according to a Huong campaign organizer (Paras. 3-4).

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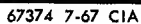


IV. Other Communist Military Developments:
There is nothing of significance to report.

V. Communist Political Developments: Hanoi has expelled a member of Canadian ICC mission (Paras. 1-2).

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I. THE MILITARY SITUATION IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. Military activity in northernmost Quang Tri Province has subsided following the heavy encounter between US Marines engaged in Operation KINGFISHER and North Vietnamese Army troops near Con Thien over the weekend. A total of 23 Marines were killed and 191 wounded in that action.

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3. Since Operation KINGFISHER began on 16 July this five-battalion US Marine sweep operation in north-eastern Quang Tri Province has resulted in 153 enemy killed. US casualties ran to 41 killed and 344 wounded.

Mortar and Rocket Attacks in III Corps

4. Delayed reports indicate that enemy forces made well-coordinated mortar and 122-mm. rocket attacks against three US and South Vietnamese Army positions just north and east of Saigon on 29 July. Seven allied soldiers were killed and 40 wounded in the bar-rages.

5. The enemy opened fire at 12:40 AM (Saigon time) on US Army battalion base camps at Lai Khe, 26 miles north of Saigon, and Phu Loi, 17 miles east of the capital. At the same time a South Vietnamese Army regimental headquarters at Tan Uyen, some 21 miles north of Saigon, was hit with mortar and recoilless rifle fire.

6. Prior to these attacks the Communists had used rockets as far south as III Corps only two times-- against Bien Hoa Air Base on 11 May and against the US base at Phuoc Vinh on 26 July. Although friendly

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[REDACTED]

casualties were relatively light in the most recent attacks, such incidents reflect a significant increase in fire power for enemy forces in this area.

7. The enemy formation most likely to have been responsible for these attacks is the Viet Cong 9th Light Infantry Division. Subordinates of the 9th are believed to have carried out the previous rocket attacks against Bien Hoa and Phuoc Vinh. [REDACTED]

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II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH VIETNAM

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Tran Van Huong's Campaign

3. Tran Van Huong, the leading civilian candidate for the presidency, has a province-level campaign organization second only to that of Chief of State Thieu, according to Vo Long Trieu, one of Huong's representatives. Trieu said, however, that fear of government reprisals has prevented the recruiting of workers at the district level. He also complained that Huong's representatives are still being harassed by the national police in an effort to intimidate other potential workers. The US Embassy tends to classify Trieu's remarks over the past few weeks concerning government interference as campaign charges rather than causes for real concern.

4. According to the embassy, Premier Ky's recent statement that unworthy elements who might happen to win the election would be overthrown by the people or the armed forces are being taken seriously in some quarters. Trieu said that Huong and the other presidential candidates are considering making a joint response to the statement.

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IV. OTHER COMMUNIST MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS

1. There is nothing of significance to report.

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V. COMMUNIST POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

1. Hanoi radio on 29 July announced that Captain James MacFie, head of the Canadian military mission to the International Control Commission, was compelled to leave Hanoi on the preceding day because of his "activities detrimental to the security" of North Vietnam.

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2. This is the first instance in which Hanoi has gone beyond an official protest in registering a complaint about the activities of an ICC member. In recent months, however, Hanoi has demonstrated a growing sensitivity to the activities of Western ICC members within the capital.

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